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**THE SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTER  
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO**

**FINAL REPORT**

**INTERNATIONAL RURAL MIGRATION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE  
A STUDY OF SIX COMMUNITIES IN RURAL EGYPT**

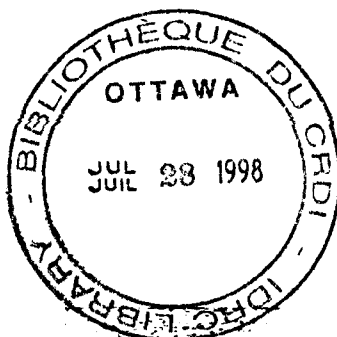
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## **I. INTRODUCTION: THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **A. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the research are to explore the patterns of international migration and return of rural manpower and the effect of these population movements on agriculture and the rural community. The major areas of investigation are: the patterns of migration and the socioeconomic characteristics of migrants and of returnees (to be referred to henceforth as R/migrants); the reasons for emigration and for return and the effects of these on agriculture; the evaluation by the migrants of their migration experience; and the perceptions of R/migrants and non-migrants of the effects of the migration of rural manpower on their community.

In accordance with the research design, it was undertaken in six villages only, three in Upper Egypt (Southern Valley) and three in Lower Egypt (Northern Delta). As the research is limited to six villages, the statistical results are not intended to be generalized to the rest of the country or even to the governorates in which these villages are situated. The study, however, was meant to be more intensive than extensive with the hope that by soliciting both quantitative and in-depth qualitative data, it would provide insights and information that can serve as a solid basis for the designing of more

extensive surveys as well as be helpful to policy makers in the formulation of socioeconomic policies aiming at maximizing the salutary effects of international rural migration.

## **B. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In accordance with the research design, the study was undertaken in two phases, as described below.

### **1. The Household Survey**

The villages for the Household Survey were selected in accordance with the following criteria - high level of out-migration using as an index the sex ratio. (See details of sampling procedures in earlier report). This preliminary survey was undertaken with the purpose of obtaining data on population composition and characteristics and the patterns of international migration and return in the study villages. The data were also utilized to identify the R/migrants and non-migrants within the agricultural manpower in order to draw the sample for the main survey. A total household survey was carried out in the small and medium sized villages and a survey of a 50% random sample of households in the large villages.

### **2. The main Sample Survey**

This was undertaken on a sample of migrants who have returned since 1986 and of non-migrants in the six study villages. The

R/migrants include farmers who cultivate their own lands, non-farmer landowners, agricultural wage workers, and agricultural family workers. The sample of non-migrants was chosen from among the farmers and the agricultural workers, for whom a much shorter interview questionnaire was used.

a. Sampling Procedures - On the basis of the Household Survey data, the sample of the returned migrants and non-migrants to be interviewed in the Main Sample Survey was selected as follows:

Returned migrants - After stratification by village and by the rural manpower categories selected for study - the farmers, landowners, agricultural workers, and family workers - a 50%-60% random sample was drawn from among those who had emigrated abroad and who returned within the five years preceding the research, that is, since 1986.

Non-migrants - a sample of farmers and agricultural wage workers who have never emigrated outside the country was randomly selected in the same proportion as are represented their own occupational categories in the sample of R/migrants in the study villages.

The original intention was to interview all the R/returned migrants identified in the Household Survey who are in agricultural occupations or who own agricultural lands. Numerous fieldwork difficulties, in addition to limited project funds, forced the narrowing of the sample. In the Dakahlia

villages, fieldwork was interrupted for several weeks because of an unusually rainy winter that made the unpaved village roads totally inaccessible. In Menia, the largest village originally chosen for the study had to be abandoned, at the request of the authorities, because of clashes between fundamentalists and security forces.

The sample that was actually surveyed did not, for a number of reasons, completely match that drawn on the basis of the household data. First of all, the information in the Household Survey on occupation and on the date of a migrant's return was not always accurate, as it was at times given by other than the migrant himself. Furthermore, some of the selected individuals were not available during the execution of the survey, 22 were temporarily absent and 29 had emigrated anew - 19 farmers, 8 agricultural workers, 2 family workers and 2 non-farming/landowners.

The total number finally interviewed is 1033 - 630 returned migrants (216 in Dakahlia and 414 in Menia) and 403 non-migrants (170 in Dakahlia and 263 in Menia). Among the returned migrants, 52.5 percent (331) are farmers, 22.4 percent (142) agricultural wage workers, 15.7 percent (99) family workers, and 9.4 percent (59) landowners in non-agricultural occupations. Among the non-migrants, 59.8% (241) are farmers and 40.2% (162) are agricultural wage workers.

#### b. Duration of Research Operations

The field surveys started in October, 1991, and were completed in February, 1992. Both the coding and the computer data processing took much longer than expected because all the personnel had to be recruited from outside the University and be trained to operations with which they had not been familiar. As a consequence, the time allotted for data analysis was very brief. The main results are reported here. Final tabulations, graphs etc. in the form that can be included in the report are not yet available. The reason is that the short-term computer personnel responsible for the entry and processing of the data left to take up more permanent employment elsewhere and have not been able to give any time so far to the production of final tabulations. The principal investigator has had to analyze the data out of the first computer printouts, a tedious and time consuming task, and to include in the text most of the statistical data what could have been better presented in tabulation or other more suitable forms. A nicer presentation and further statistical manipulations or analyses of the data will be undertaken later when this report is revised and consolidated with Dr. Nader Fergany's in preparation for publication.

### c. The Research Site

Following is a brief description of the study villages:

### **El Dakahlia Villages:**

El Tayeba - The largest village in Dakahlia, El-Tayeba has a population of about 10,500. It is in the Talkha Markaz (district) and lies about 18 kms from Mansoura, the governorate's capital. It is related to Mansoura, to which many inhabitants commute to work, by city bus or by a microbus taxi service.

Like all the other villages, the streets are unpaved, dirt roads. The majority of the houses are built in concrete and bricks and are mostly two to four stories high. Most houses are supplied with electricity and clean drinking water. At the time of the study, a sewerage system was being installed through self-help community effort, which was to be operative by the end of 1992.

El-Tayeba has five schools - three primary, an Azhari (religious) primary, and one preparatory. A secondary school serving El-Tayeba is situated in the nearby village of Nabaroh. The village has, in addition, a health unit, a post office and a public telephone.

The agricultural land within the official boundaries of the village amounts to approximately 2800 feddans, which had originally belonged to one of the big landlords and was redistributed to the peasants in lots of 2 to 2.5 feddans, in accordance with the provisions of the Agrarian Reform Law promulgated in the 1950's following the Nasser Revolution.

About 300 additional feddans are outside the agrarian reform area. These were bought by peasants from the old landlords who, as stipulated by the law, had been left with at first 100 feddans per nuclear family and later diminished to 50 in the 1960's.

El-Danabik - This medium-sized village is in the governorate's capital district of Mansoura, about 11 kms from the capital, and has a population of about 6000. Like El-Tayeba, it is also served by a public bus and a microbus taxi service, which many use to commute to their work in Mansoura.

El-Danabik has one general primary and one Azhari primary school. It has a health unit and a three-storey day-care center sponsored by the local Community Development Society. It has a post-office, a public telephone and three mosques. At the time of the field survey, a sewerage system was being installed through self-help community effort.

Within the boundaries of the village are 1221 feddans of agricultural land distributed to 450 Agrarian Reform beneficiaries. There are, in addition, 500 acres owned by peasants, mostly in small plots of 2 to 3 feddans.

Shubra-Beddin - This is the smallest village and is also in the Mansoura District. It is 7 kms away from El-Danabik and 18 kms from Mansoura city. It is connected to the latter by a public bus and a mini-bus taxi service. It has two primary schools and two mosques. The contiguous village of Beddin has a preparatory



school and a health unit that serve Shubra-Beddin. Most houses have electricity and running water; while a sewerage system is being installed. Public taps are also available, which are used for drinking and washing utensils. Most of the houses are one storey high and overlook a paved road connecting the village to Mansoura and to the main Damietta-Cairo highway.

Only 90 feddans in this village are agrarian reform land, and 806 feddans are outside the agrarian reform area. According to informants, most of the latter are small plots, but there are 4 individuals who own between 12 and 24 feddans who do not farm their own lands but either rent it out or engage sharecroppers.

#### **The Menia villages:**

**Ibshak** - This, the largest Menia village with a population of appx. 12,000, was not the researchers' first choice. The village originally chosen in accordance with the study's sampling design had to be abandoned for security reasons and Ibshak substituted at the advice of the local authorities. Ibshak proved to have a smaller proportion of ever-migrants than those chosen on the basis of the national census data and the study's selection criteria.

The village lies at about 6 kms west of the seat of the district, Beni-Mazar. Less than half of the homes have piped clean water; while most of the residents utilize hand pumps. It has no sewerage system but has had electricity since 1970. It has three schools, two primary and one preparatory; while a

religious primary school was under construction during the field surveys. Ibshak is served by a health and a veterinary unit, two pharmacies, a youth center, and a police station.

Most of the farmers are beneficiaries of agrarian reform, originally as tenants, but they have recently been given ownership deeds to the land. An Agrarian Reform Cooperative serves the beneficiaries; while an agricultural cooperative, similar to those available in the rest of rural Egypt, serves the rest of the farmers. The village has no enterprises, a situation that is clearly reflected in its occupational structure.

Dair El-Sanguriya - This is a medium sized village, also in the Beni Mazar district, has a population of about 6000. The first part of the name, Dair, means monastery and is derived from the ancient church that is located in the village. The village lies alongside the Yussef Canal. A second canal, Sirri Pasha Canal, cuts through the village and is used for irrigation. Within the official boundaries of the village are six small "ezbas". These are hamlets that grew around large estates, two of which are inhabited by landowning or tenant farmers originally from outside Dair-El-Sanguria.

The village has an agricultural cooperative and one of the "ezbas" has a flour mill. About one fifth of the houses have piped clean water and the rest use hand pumps or the canal. It has electricity but no sewerage; while the main means of

transportation linking the village to the outside is a microbus.

Baradonet Al-Ashraf - This village is at 12 kms west of Bani-Mazar. On its northern border lies the large village of Ibshak. Although a small village with only 3012 inhabitants, it has many services and facilities - two primary schools (one Azhari and one regular), one preparatory school, a health and a social affairs unit, a post office, an agricultural cooperative, and a local unit of the Agricultural Credit and Development Bank.

As the primary focus of this study is migration and return within the contemporary situation, the Main Sample Survey focusses on the rural migrants who have returned since 1986. Its data, consequently, do not provide information on the overall migration process. The preliminary Household Survey, however, does include data on the general international migration situation and the patterns and volume of migration of farmers and agricultural workers relative to other occupational groups.

Although the results of the Household Survey are reported by Dr. Nader Fergany in a separate report, which will eventually be consolidated with this report into one monograph after eliminating any overlaps, some of the data are analyzed in the following sections. The rural manpower categories into which the sample of the Main Survey is disaggregated are utilized in the analysis so as to relate the data of the two surveys.

## II. RURAL MANPOWER AND MIGRATION - HOUSEHOLD SURVEY DATA

### A. COMPOSITION OF THE LABOR FORCE

The Household Survey data shows that a total of 6696 individuals in the study sample are in the labor force; 6246 are active and 453, 6.8%, are unemployed. In addition, there are 9 individuals for whom the information is missing. Within the active labor force, 3414 or 53.8% are engaged directly in agricultural activities. These include 1878 farmers (55.0% of the agricultural manpower and 28.0% of the active labor force); 688 agricultural family workers (20.1% and 11.0); 639 non-specialized agricultural wage laborers (18.7% and 9.5%); and 209 specialized agricultural workers, 6.1% and 3.3%. In addition, there are 203 individuals, 5.9% and 3.2%, working as food vendors or in commercial activities handling agricultural products (grain or cattle), and 65, 1.9% and 1.0%, working as government employees in agricultural departments, in state-run agricultural estates, or in related departments such as irrigation or veterinary medicine.

Those in occupations unrelated to agriculture include 587 self-employed skilled workers and artisans, 9.4% of the active labor force; 489 domestic workers, 7.8%; 226 daily wage laborers 3.6%; 203 factory workers, 3.3%; and 100 vendors and merchants of non-food products, 1.6%. Among the better educated white

collar workers are 359 clerks and secretaries, 5.4%; 123 middle level professional with post high school diplomas, 1.8%; and 182 university trained professionals, 2.7%, and 10 local government representatives, 0.02%. The rest of the manpower include 180 guards, policemen and army recruits, 2.9%, and 32 religious functionaries, 0.05%.

## **B. DATE AND COUNTRY OF MIGRATION**

### **1. First International Migration Experience**

The first wave of migration out of the study villages was in the 1970's, mostly in the second half of the decade. In the first half, out of the 51 individuals who sought work abroad, all but one were from Menia. Forty-seven of them headed for Libya, two for Saudi Arabia and one for Lebanon. The majority were cultivators, 25 farmers and 8 agricultural wage workers.

The timing and destination of the first and last migrations are analyzed below. Unfortunately, the household data included information on the first and last migrations only and, therefore, the volume of out-migration by year of migration and destination could not be analyzed.

In the second half of the decade, the number of individuals who emigrated for the first time quadrupled to 410; these constitute 12.8% of all first emigrations, two thirds of which were out of Menia. The farmers made up 46.1% and, together with the agricultural laborers, 61.7% of all these first-time

emigrants. The Dakahlia villages witnessed their first important wave of emigration, with about 8.4% (131) of its first-time emigrants leaving during that period. The bulk of new emigrants, 68.1%, still came from Menia. Libya was the destination of 40.0% of these early emigrants. The other Arab countries that began to attract the migrants were Iraq, which received 23.7% (97) of all first migrants in the second half of the 70's, Saudi Arabia 18.1% (74), Jordan 13.4% (55), and Lebanon 3.7% (13).

Libya attracted 57.7% of the first-time migrants of the Menia villages, Iraq 20.8%, Saudi Arabia 12.5%, and Jordan 8.6%. As to those of the Dakahlia villages, both Iraq and Saudi Arabia attracted 29.8% each of the first-time migrants, Jordan 23.7% and Lebanon 9.9%; while only 3 persons went to Libya.

In the first half of the 1980's, the number of first migrations doubled from those of 1975-1979 to 989 (30.9% of all first migrations) and peaked to 1364 (42.7% ) in the second half of the decade. First migrations to Libya dwindled following the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel. They made up only 3.7% (37) of all first migrants in the first half of the eighties and as little as 0.5% (55) in the second half. At the same time, Iraq became the most important migration destination attracting 55.4% of the new migrants in the first half and 62.3% in the second half of the decade. The volume of first migrations to Jordan also increased (190 or 19.2% of all first emigrations of 1980-1985 and 262 or 19.2% of those of 1985-1989

). Migration to Saudi Arabia also increased in absolute numbers even though it decreased in relative terms - from 74 or 18.1% of the first migrants of 1975-1979, to 166 or 16.8% of those of 1980-1985, to 160 or 11.7% of those in 1985-1989.

In the 1990's, obviously due to the Gulf War, there was a shift in the destination of first time migrations. Only 3.9% (22) of all new emigrants headed for Iraq and 20.6% (77) to Jordan. Saudi Arabia, for the first time, attracted the largest percentage of first-time migrants, 37.3% (137), the majority of whom (103) were from Dakahlia. Libya, again, opened up and took in large numbers; it received 117 new migrants, 31.4%, the majority of whom (91) were from Menia.

When we look at the first destination of agricultural migrants, we find that Iraq, which received 1518 or 47.5% of all first migrations, attracted 754 or 49.7% of all those working directly in agriculture, a percentage slightly higher than their proportion within the total group of migrants (1526 out of 3196 or 47.7%). Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, received only 18.7% (285) of the farmers and other agricultural workers, Libya 15.5% (237), Jordan 14.5% (221), and Lebanon 1.4% (22).

## 2. Last Migration

As 42.3% of the migrants have been abroad more than once, the dates of the last emigration for these frequent migrants are, naturally different from, and more recent than, those of their first emigration. The data on last emigrations point to a peak

during the second part of the 1980's (1494 or 46.8% of all last emigrations); 58.4% (873) of them to Iraq, 16.4% (245) to Saudi Arabia and 15.5% (232) to Jordan. In 1990, 27.3% (873) of all last emigrations took place. The emigrants going to Iraq dwindled to 46, 5.3% of the emigrants during that period, while Saudi Arabia and Libya attracted the largest numbers (303 or 34.7% and 295 or 33.8%, respectively). Migrations to Saudi Arabia increased by 2.4% (from 245 to 303) from those in 1985-1989, while those to Libya increased threefold from 93 to 295.

### **C MIGRATION PATTERNS OF VARIOUS OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS**

#### **1. Ever-Migrants**

Within the active labor force in all the study villages (6246), a little more than half, 3196 or 51.2%, have at one time or another emigrated internationally in search of employment, all but 4 of whom to Arab countries. In addition, there are 109 unemployed ever-migrants representing 24.1% of the unemployed (453).

The agricultural manpower (3414) constitutes 50.9% of the labor force in the Household Survey sample (including the unemployed) but makes up 47.7% (1526) of ever migrants. The proportion of ever-migrants within the agricultural manpower is 44.7%. This is a lower rate than is found within the rest of the occupational groups, 54.8% of whom are ever-migrants. There are



differences, however, in the proportion of ever-migrants within the various sub-groups of the agricultural and non-agricultural manpower. Among the former, the highest proportion of ever migrants, 79.0%, is found within the wage workers specialized in such agricultural activities as food crop cultivation, animal husbandry, and pest and insect control. In comparison, 49.5% of the non-specialized agricultural daily wage workers, 45.4% of the farmers and only 27.6% of the agricultural family workers are ever-migrants.

Within the non-agricultural labor force, the daily wage laborers (179 out of 226 or 79.2%) have the highest proportion of ever-migrants. They make up 8.8% of the labor force but constitute 12.7% of all ever-migrants. The other groups with high proportions of ever-migrants are: the self-employed artisans and skilled workers, 69.0% (405 out of 587); domestic workers, 53.4% (261 out of 489); factory workers, 51.1% (137 out of 268); clerical and petty administrative employees, 50.9% (268 out of 527); and university trained, mainly government, employees, 50.0% (102 out of 204).

## 2. Current Migrants

As a result of the massive exodus of migrants from the Gulf area, we find only 29.4% (943) of the ever-migrants still working abroad at the time of the Household Survey (end of 1991 and beginning of 1992). The bulk of the migrants, 81.7% (1840) had been abroad for periods of two years or less - 16.8% (379)

less than a year, 40.3% (907) one year; and 24.6% (554) two years. As to the rest, 12.1% (272) stayed three to four years, and 4.7% (105) five to seven years. Among those directly engaged in agricultural work (farmers, family workers and agricultural wage workers), 84.9% (1134) returned after spending two years or less abroad.

About eighty percent of the return was during the second half of the eighties and early nineties (16.1% between 1980 and 1985, 49.6% between 1985 and 1989, and 30.9% at the beginning of the 1990's).

The Gulf War affected the farmers and the non-specialized agricultural workers, most of whom were in Iraq just before the crisis, more seriously than it did specialized agricultural workers or other categories of migrants in non-agricultural occupations. Only 12.4% (190) of the ever migrants in agricultural occupations were still abroad during the survey; and these did not include any farmers or family workers. Among these were 47 agricultural daily wage workers (14.8% of the ever migrants and 7.3% of their total group); but the majority of current migrants, 75.3% (143), were specialized agricultural workers who constitute 68.4% of their group. Most of these were in Saudi Arabia or Libya; while 19 were still in Iraq, from which large numbers had fled or been expelled because of the Gulf conflict.

A higher proportion of the ever-migrants from among the non-agricultural labor force, 47.8% (742), were still abroad during the Household Survey and they represent 26.2% of their category in the sample. The highest percentage was among the self-employed artisans and skilled workers, 52.4% of their category and 67.0% of their ever migrants (308). The non-agricultural daily wage workers have the next highest percentage of current migrants, 62.8% and 79.3 % (142); followed by the domestic workers , 31.3% and 58.6% (153); and the factory workers, 26.9% and 52.5% (72). Although there are high proportions of ever-migrants among university trained government employees and individuals in petty administrative jobs, there are few current migrants among them - 34 and 11 individuals, respectively.

### 3. Number of Migrations Per Individual

The majority of migrants emigrated only once, 57.7% (1843); 28.7% (916) twice and 3.6% (114) three times; 1.2% (37) four times and the 9 remaining as many as 5 to 8 times. As is clear from the results of the Main Sample Survey which solicited the date and country of immigration for each single migration, most of those who emigrated more than once did not change the country of immigration; and most of those who changed did so only once.

Only a small percentage of the better educated emigrated more than once. Among the 106 university educated migrants, for example, 70.8% (75) emigrated once, 28.3% (30) twice and one

person three times. In comparison, 44.3% of the agricultural workers and 47.5% of the farmers emigrated more than once.

The above difference are probably due, first of all, to the fact that the educated migrants usually work under contract rather than on an erratic daily wage basis, as is the case of most agricultural and other non-specialized laborers. While their jobs in the country of immigration are less secure and their incomes less steady, the farmers and agricultural workers are not tied down by contracts and, hence, are able to stay abroad as long as they wish or are allowed, return home to be with their families or to take care of some important business, then go off again when the extra income is needed and/or a new emigration opportunity presents itself. There is also the fact that the farming population started emigrating earlier and have, thus, had more opportunity to go back and forth than the other categories of migrants, the majority of whom started migrating in the 1980's.

### III. MAIN RESULTS OF THE SAMPLE SURVEY

In this and the following sections, the main results of the Sample Survey of R/migrants and of non-migrants are reviewed. To recapitulate what was already mentioned earlier, the sample is composed of the following categories:

	R/Migrants		Non-Migrants		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
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Farmers	331	52.5	241	59.8	572	55.4
Wage Workers	141	22.4	162	40.2	303	29.3
Family workers	99	15.7	--	--	99	09.6
Landowners	59	09.4	--	--	59	05.7
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Total	630	100.0	403	100.0	1033	100.0

#### A. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

##### 1. Sex

The sample is almost exclusively male; all the R/migrants are. Among the non-migrants are 13 female farmers, 8 in Dakahlia and 5 in Menia. The sample of non-migrant farmers was chosen from among the household heads in non-migrant families. As the women, twelve of whom are widowed and one is divorced, are farmers and are the heads of their respective households, they fell into the sample.

##### 2. Age and Marital Status

Only one R/migrant is under twenty and 3.33% are between 20 and 24 years of age. The majority, 57.78%, are between the ages of

25 and 39; and 38.25% are 40 and older. Among the latter, the percentage gets smaller the higher the age so that we find only 3.83%. R/migrants in the age bracket 60 to 69. There are age differences between the various categories of R/migrants. The farmers are the oldest, with only 23.94% under 35. The landowners in non-agricultural occupations and the agricultural wage workers are somewhat younger; 52.53 and 47.19%, respectively, are under 35. The youngest group are agricultural family workers, of whom as many as 75.75% are less than 35 years old and 89.9% less than 40. Farmers seem to consider emigrating when the family grows larger and the land can no longer provide enough for all their needs. Family workers, obviously, have no independent means and can easily be tempted to seek their fortunes abroad.

Although the farmers are older than the rest of the R/migrants, they are generally younger than the farmers who never migrated; 13.8% of them are under 40. Over half of the non-migrant farmers, 51.0%, are 50 years of age or older as compared to only 19.3% of the R/migrant farmers. The non-migrant agricultural daily wage workers are younger than the non-migrant farmers, 33.9% under 40. They too, however, are much older than the R/migrant agricultural workers, 47.2% of whom are under 35 and 89.90 percent under 40. (When calculated, median age will be used for age comparisons.)

The majority of the R/migrants and the non-migrants are married. Only 1.5% of the farmers are single as compared to

8.4% of the agricultural workers, 10.10% of the family workers and 17.0% of landowners/non-farmers. Five of the six divorced individuals, all 12 widows and 7 widowers are non-migrants.

### 3. Education

The great majority, 85.6% (884) of the total sample, have had no schooling. Of these 75.6% (781) are illiterate and 10.1% (104) can just read and write. The highest rate of non-schooled individuals is found among the non-migrants - 93.8% (226) of the farmers and 96.9% (157) of the agricultural workers. The rates for the returned migrants in descending order are as follows: farmers 89.1% (295), agricultural wage workers 88.7% (125), family workers 68.7% (68), and finally the landowner/non-farmers, among whom less than a quarter, 23.73%, have never attended school.

The educational attainment of those who did attend school is also rather low. Of the 13.8% (143 individuals) who have had some schooling, 18.9% dropped out of primary school; 36.4% (51) completed their primary education only a few of whom went on to preparatory school. Most of the rest stopped after obtaining their secondary school certificates, as the figures in the following table show:

Education	NO	Percent	Percent of total sample
Few Years of Primary	27	18.88	2.61
Primary	43	30.07	4.16
Preparatory	9	6.29	0.87
Secondary	50	34.97	4.84
Diploma	4	2.80	0.39
University	10	6.99	0.97
	143	100.00	3.84

Most of the R/migrant farmers and agricultural workers who have been to school have not gone beyond the primary level. The majority of the landowners/non farmers (37 out of 59), on the other hand, have obtained secondary school (30) or university diplomas (7). A larger proportion of the family workers, who are generally younger, attained higher educational levels than the migrant and non-migrant farmers and agricultural workers. Fifteen percent among them completed secondary school education as compared to 1.8% of the R/migrant farmers, 2.1% of the R/migrant agricultural workers, 0.8% of the non-migrant farmers, and none of the non-migrant agricultural workers.

The educational level of all categories is lower in Menia than in Dakahlia. The percentage of illiterates and of those who can just read and write is 89.4% in Menia as over against 78.7% in Dakahlia. Of those who have had some schooling, 9.6% in Dakahlia villages have secondary (29) or university education (5); only 4.3% in Menia have (26 secondary and 3 university.)

The educational level of the wives is much lower than that of the husbands. Only 4.5% (46) have had any schooling, about half



of whom (22) are wives of landowners. All of the wives of non-migrant farmers and agricultural workers have either never been to school or have dropped out after one or two years of primary education. Around 8.0% of the wives of R/migrant family workers and 1.5% of those of R/migrant farmers have been to school and have completed at least the primary level. Eighteen of the 26 wives with secondary school diplomas and the two with university degrees are wives of R/migrant landowners.

Some 52 women (5.0%) of the wives are reported to be working, all but eight of whom are from Dakahlia. Thirteen-four are engaged in farming activities, 7 are dressmakers, 2 street vendors, and 6 are clerks or teachers with intermediate post high-school diplomas.

#### 4. Income

Income figures are, naturally, always difficult to obtain, especially from non-salaried individuals such as farmers and daily wage workers. Forty-six percent of the farmers were not able to give estimates. Some of them explained that they did not make any profit out of the land. Most of the crops were for their own consumption, and what they sold only covered expenses. Others said they could not give any estimates explaining, "It depends on crop production" or "on what God provides".

The income of the farmers who gave figures was very low indeed. These figures should be used with caution, however. Some of the

main crops, such as wheat, corn, and rice, are used mainly or entirely for home consumption, and bersim (clover) is used as animal feed. It was clear from some of the respondents' statements that they did not include the cash value of these crops in their calculation of income. The yearly cash income figures given by the farmers ranged between L.E. 100 and L.E. 3600. Such low figures explain and corroborate the farmers' own statements as to why many of them were driven to emigrate. Even if doubled to make up for any deliberate or inadvertent underestimation, they would still be too low to meet the needs of a rural family.

The agricultural daily wage workers seem to be even worse off than the farmers. At wages of between L.E. 2 and L.E. 4 a day, a worker's yearly income at near full employment (300 days a year) would range between L.E. 600 and L.E. 1500. Family workers naturally have no cash income. They work for their keep and depend on their families for the provision of their needs.

## **B. MIGRATION PATTERNS OF RETURNEES**

### **1. Frequency of Migration**

The majority, 347 or 55.1%, of the R/migrants in the sample have had more than one migration experience. A much higher proportion, 67.6%, of the farmers, however, have been abroad more than once - 44.2% twice, 22.4% between 3-4 times, and 3

individuals as many as 5 to 6 times. In comparison, we find that 49.2% of the non-farmer/landowners, 41.4% of the family workers, and 38.1% of the agricultural wage workers have emigrated more than once, most of whom no more than twice. In Dakahlia, only 7.4% emigrated more than two times as over against 21.7% in Menia.

## 2. Age at First Migration

The youngest group at first migration were the family workers, among whom 13.1% were under 20 and 22.2% in the 20-24 age bracket, making a total of 53.54% who were under 25. In comparison, 37.3% of the landowners, 28.9% of the migrant workers and only 19.4% of the farmers were under 20. On the other hand, we find that 25.5% of the farmers first emigrated at 40 or above, and 13.0% between the ages of 45 and 60. Only 6% of the other groups' first emigrated between the ages of 45 and 48, and none above.

## 3. Dates of Durations of First and Last Emigrations

The majority of the R/ migrants in the sample emigrated for the first time in the 1980's. A small percentage, 11.75%, emigrated in the 1970's, most of whom are farmers from Menia; and, except for 8 farmers, they did so in the second half of the decade. While 22.5% of the Menia R/migrants first migrated before 1980, only 5.4% of those from Dakahlia did.

Over half of the returned migrants stayed only one year or less in their first country of emigration and 80.6 for two years or less; 15.7% stayed 3-5 years and the rest, 3.7%, stayed for periods varying between 6 and 11 years.

The large majority of R/migrants in the sample, 75.4%, emigrated for the last time during the second half of the 1980's and 12.4% during 1990-1991. Another 11.4% emigrated during the first half of the 80's and only 5 individuals in the 70's.

On their last emigration, most of the returnees, 78.7%, had stayed abroad around one to two years (8.3% less than one year, 46.7% one year and 23.8% 2 years), 16.5% between 3 to 5 years and the rest, 4.8%, between 6 and 10 years.

#### 4. Reasons for Emigrating

Asked why they decided to emigrate, most of the R/migrants, as may be expected, said they wanted to find a job to earn money and improve their level of living in general and/or to acquire specific goods and amenities. A small number wanted to "see the world", "change air" or follow the example of others and discover what the experience might bring them.

When the responses are broken down more finely, we find that over half of the group, 53.0% (330), wanted to increase the family income and to provide a better life for themselves and

their dependents, their children mostly, but sometimes other dependents such as parents or younger siblings.

Typical statements:

I wanted to get money like the other people to improve my living and satisfy my needs.

I wanted a better income than I make here.

We want a good life. That is why I went abroad and to bring back a color television for me to watch.

I went away to improve my living standard and to buy a recorder, a television and clothes for the children and to build a nice house.

I have children from a second wife in another village. I have nine children who need to be brought up.

I needed money and I wanted to marry off my daughter. I was not settled and I had to think of my children.

I wanted to get myself established and make my children comfortable the way other people have done.

I wanted to increase my income and earn money to improve my level of living and to help my siblings with their school expenses.

In addition, 7.8% (49), said they had to seek their livelihood abroad as they were facing particularly difficult circumstances: a rising cost of living (29) and the lack of an adequate income, a stable employment (19) or enough/productive agricultural land (6) to meet their financial obligations or to manage without getting into debt.

Examples of statements:

Life here is very expensive and the circumstances very difficult.

Because life is bitter and nothing but fatigue; and because one became tired of work in the fields.

Life is very expensive and there wasn't much work around here. My family needed a lot of expenses that I couldn't afford; and I wanted to get myself established.

Things were expensive. I had no work; and I had a very difficult time. Also because all the people who go abroad manage to improve their lot.

I left because of life's "bitterness" and the difficulty of gaining one's livelihood. There is not much work available around here. People leave to bring back money and clothes for their children and improve their living standards."

The land was in poor shape and the price of the crops was low. I needed money; so I went abroad.

The agricultural land was limited. I had a great deal of expenses; and I did not have a house.

Apart from the general improvements that the majority aspired for, there were specific things that some of the R/migrants had hoped to obtain with money earned abroad. The most important of these is a house. This was mentioned by 18.3% (109 ) of the R/migrants, and by an almost equal percentage within all the occupational categories.

Examples of answers:

I did not have land to till. Life was very difficult; and I needed a house for my children.

I was living with my father, I and my siblings. I wanted to get married and wanted a house, as my siblings are numerous.

I wanted to build a house and to marry off my daughters.

Other people were going abroad and because I wanted to build a house.

When the big house split up [after his father died] I wanted to buy a house; so I went abroad and so was able to buy a piece of land on which to build a house.

I wanted to build a house and marry off my son.

To be able to get married or to marry off their children or other dependents was why 10% (63) of the respondents decided to leave home and seek a job in a foreign land. Marriage is usually a costly undertaking. On the part of the bride's parents, they have to pay for the bride's trousseau as well as furnish the young couple's home. The bridegroom has to offer his bride a dowry, finance the wedding celebration and, most important of all, provide the couple's residence. Eighteen of those who wanted to get married also wanted to build a house. It is not surprising that about half of those who wanted money to get married are from the generally younger family workers; and these represent 31.3% of their group. Only 2.7% (9) of the older farmers gave this as a reason for migrating. On the other hand, most of the 16 persons who needed extra money to finance the marriage of their children or other close relative were older farmers,

**Typical responses:**

I wanted to get married; and, after this, I would begin to think of other things.

I went abroad to try my luck and to get married.

I wanted to bring back money and marry my children.

I needed money and I wanted to marry my daughters. I was not yet established; and I was thinking of my children.

I wanted to improve my level of living, to marry off my oldest daughter and to buy something to ensure the future.

I wanted to improve my living, to marry off my sister and to build a house.

Some 20 individual, seeing that many people around them were traveling to other Arab countries and improving their lot, thought of joining the emigrants and trying out their luck.

Examples of answers:

I wanted to see why people travelled abroad. Most people used to go away and come back enriched, by the grace of God, so I wanted to try to do the same.

I said, "Let me travel the way other people are doing and see the world." That's all.

I found all the young people going abroad, I went with them to change air a bit away from Egypt.

I found that all those who travel are better off. I therefore decided to go abroad too so that God may give me of his bounty.

A very small minority seem to have been motivated by the desire to invest in some productive activity - in purchasing agricultural land or, in the case of farmers, in the modernization of their agriculture. Only five farmers and one wage worker said that they had gone abroad to earn money in order to buy land and two farmers to purchase irrigation pumps. In addition, four said they wanted to make money to start some enterprise without specifying what kind.

#### **5. Destination of First and Last Emigrations**

The country to which the largest number of R/migrants in the sample, 60.6% (382), first emigrated was Iraq; while 14.3% (90) went to Jordan, 13.2% (83) to Saudi Arabia, 10.5% (66) to Libya; and the rest, less than one percent in each case, to Kuwait, Lebanon, and Yemen. An equally large percentage, from



both Dakahlia and Menia, went to Iraq on their first migration. A larger percentage of the R/migrants from Dakahlia, however, went to Jordan and Saudi Arabia; while all those who went to Libya were from Menia, and they constitute 10.48% of its returned migrants .

As to the last country of destination, we find that more than half the group had been to Iraq, 55.6% (350) - 53.7% (116) of the R/migrants of Dakahlia and 234 or 56.5% of those of Menia. Among them are a little less than half of the farmers, 48.6% (161) and of the landowners, 49.2% (29), but much larger percentages of the agricultural workers 70.2% (99) and of the family workers 61.6% (61). Saudi Arabia was the last country of immigration for 17.9% of the R/Migrants, 76.1% (86 ) of whom are farmers and these constitute 26.0% of R-migrant farmers. Eighty one, 12.9%, last emigrated to Jordan, with an almost equal percentage from both Dakahlia and Menia; while, 18.1% (75), went to libya, all but one of whom are from Menia.

#### **6. Reasons for Choice of Country of Last Migration**

What attracts migrants to specific countries? The most frequent reason given by R/migrants for choosing the last country of immigration, by 32.2% (203) of the R/migrants, is the country's open door immigration policy and easy travel arrangements. Migrants understandably flocked to countries that did not require any work contract, did not involve complicated procedures for obtaining visas or great travel expenses.

Seventy-nine percent (161) of those who gave that reason were referring to Iraq; and they constitute 36.9% of all those who had last emigrated to that country. The rest were mainly referring to Jordan (21 out of the 81 who had been there) and to Libya (16 out of 77).

The other R/migrants made their choice of country because of a number of other considerations. They had been there before and had found their stay satisfactory, 11.4% - mostly referring to Iraq and Jordan. There are work opportunities, 8.7%; they had relatives or friends there, 8.4%; and its cost of living is low, 8.4% - all referring to Iraq, Libya and Jordan. (See Table below)

Reasons for Choice	Country of Immigration				Total No	Sample %
	Iraq %	S/Arabia %	Jordan %	Libya %		
Easy Entry/	46.0	2.6	25.9	20.8	203	32.2
Had Been Before	14.4	0.9	17.3	7.7	72	11.4
Work Opportunities	7.7	8.0	10.0	14.3	55	8.7
Had Friends/Rels	6.6	8.0	18.5	7.8	53	8.4
Low Living Cost	8.6	2.6	8.6	15.6	53	8.4
The One Available	7.4	5.3	6.2	18.2	51	8.1
Had Contract	0.6	25.6	1.2	2.6	38	6.0
Holy Land	0.0	31.9	0.0	0.0	37	5.9
High Wages	1.7	13.3	1.2	2.6	25	4.0
Currency Exchange	4.4	0.0	3.7	1.3	19	3.0
Gulf War/no War	0.0	1.8	2.5	3.9	7	1.1
Has no Taxes	0.3	0.0	1.2	5.2	6	0.9
Miscellaneous	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	3	0.6
No Answer	1.4	0.0	3.7	0.0	8	1.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	630	100.0

About 5.0 percent said they had work contracts; these were almost exclusively referring to Saudi Arabia which does not allow immigrants without contracts. Another three percent chose to emigrate, mainly to Iraq, because the country allowed the exchange or transfer of the money earned there. (See Table below)

#### 7. Employment Status Before Last Emigration

A small number of R/migrants, thirty-three, said they had not been working prior to their last emigration; 14 of them are currently landowners of farmland, 8 are farmers, 6 agricultural workers and 5 family workers. Prior to emigration, 24 of these were army draftees, 3 students, and 6 landowners. It is perhaps understandable that only the landowners, who have a higher educational level, consider themselves unemployed if not engaged in some other regular employment besides managing their lands. There is, undoubtedly, disguised unemployment among the farmers and family workers and under-employment among the wage laborers - conditions of which they themselves are conscious as is clear from their own statements as to their reasons for seeking work overseas. But, neither can such groups be categorized nor do they view themselves as "unemployed".

#### 8. Employment in Country of Immigration

The bulk of the R/migrants had gone to work abroad without any work contracts, 85.6% (539). Relatively more of the farmers

(18.1%) and landowners (18.6%) than the agricultural workers (9.2%) or the family workers ( 6.1%) had contracts. Seventy-five out of the 90 who had work contracts had been to Saudi Arabia, which refuses entry to any labor migrant without a work contract.

In the country of immigration, no more than 17.0% (107) of the R/migrants worked in jobs related to agriculture, mostly as non-specialized casual labor. On the other hand, 32.3% (204) of the entire group were engaged in construction work; 15.1% (9) as non-specialized daily wage laborers; 15.7% (99) as factory workers; 8.4% (53) as domestic workers, custodians, or car drivers; 7.1% (45) in service jobs (shop salesmen, butcher helper, waiter, etc.). Another 1.7% (11), most of whom are non-farming landowners, were engaged in secretarial or professional jobs, mostly teaching. (There were six missing answers.)

Did any of the migrants benefit vocationally from the work undertaken abroad in terms of learning a new trade or skill; and if so, were any of these of value to their work as farmers or as agricultural workers?. Only Forty-two, 10.1%, found that their foreign employment had added anything to their knowledge or skills. This is not altogether surprising considering the type of non-agricultural and unskilled jobs in which the vast majority had been engaged - jobs that could not contribute much to the skills nor tap the knowledge of experienced farmers. Of those who said they had gained from their work, only two referred to agricultural skills: one learned to plant fruit

trees and grow water melon and the other tomatoes and horse beans. The rest gained skills totally unrelated to agriculture, such as: blacksmithing, carpentry, tailoring, cooking, car mechanics, construction work, driving, brick making, plastering and painting, and operating industrial machinery.

#### 9. Reasons for Return

The most important reason for the return of 35.6% (224) of the migrants is because of the homesickness and loneliness they felt living in a foreign land. Another 8.9% (56) wanted to return to be with their families and to take care of, give an education to, or secure the future of their children. This means that a total of 44.5% returned to enjoy the comfort or their familiar world and to look after their families and children. The following are examples of respondents' statements:

I longed for my country and my children; and I wanted to rest from the expatriate's life.

One got bored and fed up living as a stranger; and I longed for the people of Egypt.

Was I going to stay there forever? Once God gave me of his bounty, I came back to see my father, my mother, my home, my country.

Am I going to stay there 'till I get pickled'? God was bountiful to me; so I came back to see my children, my cultivation, and my village.

My children are young and they need care and attention for they are all girls.

For the 'sake of my children's future and to give them an education.

For 14.1% (89) of the migrants, it was the poor work conditions as well as the bad treatment they had suffered abroad that pushed them to return home. In addition, 8.9% (56) became disenchanted with the deteriorating economic situation and wage decreases in the country of immigration, mostly referring to Iraq; while 42, 6.7%, had found few work opportunities and did not make enough money to make their stay worthwhile. If, after removing the overlaps, we combine all those who returned because of unfavorable conditions in the country of immigration, we get a total 95 R/migrants or 15.1%. To these can also be added the 9.5% (60) of returnees forced out, mainly from Iraq, because of the Gulf War and to a lesser extent because of the Iraq-Iran war. This means that the return of about one fourth of the migrants was due essentially to push factors in the country of immigration.

Examples of respondents' statements:

The conditions were very bad and the work very difficult. Life there was full of humiliation. Frankly I preferred to be back here.

I suffered much hardship in my work abroad. I became tired and decided to return. I also wanted to get married and settle down first and then perhaps think of going away again.

The treatment we received there was very bad and the work difficult. One is better off in his country than in Iraq with all the indignities one has to face there.

Conditions deteriorated badly over there; the way people treated us worsened, and there were few work opportunities.

No work was available and times were bad. I am more useful in my country

I got fed up. The salary was low, and I could not save any money that would be worth all the fatigue, the estrangement, and being far away from my family.

Iraq deteriorated; the economic situation was very bad; and I wanted to build myself.

The situation in Iraq had become very bad; and the allowed currency exchange had come down until it reached three "papers" [vouchers equivalent to 100 exchangeable dollars each]. Thank God, I returned before the Gulf War.

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq was calamitous, and conditions in Iraq became very difficult.

Only fifty-six migrants, 8.9%, returned to take care of their land and cultivation. Forty-four of these are farmers; and they constitute 13.3% of the returned farmers in the sample; and 10 are family workers who were called back to help with farm work.

Forty-four, 7.5%, came back to get married and 3 to marry off their children. Twenty-nine, 4.6%, had to return to their old government jobs at the end of their secondment abroad or to take up their first jobs with the government; and 24, 3.8% came home for health reasons.

### **C. MIGRATION AND AGRICULTURE**

1. Size of Agricultural Landholdings The size of the agricultural land cultivated by the full time or part time farmers, both R/migrant and non-migrant, in the sample is rather small: 89.3% (628 out of 703) is less than three feddans - 92.6% (250 out of 270) in Dakahlia and 87.3% (378 out of 433) in Menia). Of these, 74.3% (522) have less than 2 - 73.0% (197) in Dakahlia and 75.1% (325) in Menia. [Average holding to be

calculated). These include, 572 full-time farmers, 59 non-farmer/landowners, 46 family workers and 26 agricultural workers. The definition of family worker is someone who has no independent income but works on family land and depends on the family for the provision of his needs. The reason why 46 family workers who own land were not considered farmers has to do with a coding error due to unclear statements by respondents. Some of the younger farmers who work on inherited land that has not been subdivided but which they cultivate jointly with other members of the family, gave their occupation as workers on family land. They were, therefore, coded and interviewed as family workers when they should, perhaps, have been included among the landowning farmers.)

Among all the R/migrant and non-migrant farmers and landholders, 40.0% (281) are beneficiaries of Agrarian Reform to whom land, confiscated from large landowners following the Nasser Revolution, was distributed in plots of about 2.5 feddans. Each farmer's land, for the sake of more efficient irrigation and crop rotation, was divided into three pieces, each located in a different area. Every 100 acres of Agrarian Reform Land, even though held by many farmers, is cultivated as one unit and irrigated by one large irrigation wheel.

Most of the Agrarian Reform beneficiaries, 75.8% (213), are from Dakahlia and constitute 78.9% of the farmers in the Dakahlia sample. Only 68 out of 433 individuals, 15.7%, in the Menia sample are Agrarian Reform beneficiaries.



The majority, 92.2% (648), of those who have agricultural landholdings own all or part of the land they cultivate (68 of these rent land in addition to those they own); the rest are tenants, 6.8% (48). The majority of those who rent land are in Menia, (85 out of 119 or 71.4%, and these constitute 19.6% of landholders in Menia. All but 10 of these rent land outside land reform areas where, until very recently, the practice was forbidden by law. In Dakahlia, where most of the lands are in agrarian reform areas, only 34 or 12.6% of the landholders have rented land, 14 of them within agrarian reform areas.

## **2. Main crops cultivated before and after emigration**

Before their last emigration, the main cash crops the farmers and landowners cultivated were cotton and fava beans. In both Dakahlia and Menia, 97.1% grew cotton ; but fava beans was grown only in Menia, by 90.4% of the landholders.

Other main crops were grown mostly for home consumption: wheat by 73.3% of the total group, but by a higher proportion, 91.8%, in Dakahlia than in Menia, 62.5%; corn by 72.4%, with a higher percentage in Menia villages, 93.2%, than in Dakahlia, 39.2%; and rice only in Dakahlia and grown by all but three of its landholders. In addition, 25.2% of the landholders grew bersim in both Dakahlia and Menia villages; and 12 grew garlic and 5 coriander as main crops, all of whom are from Menia.

Secondary crops grown for home consumption include bersim, by 76.5% of the landholders. In addition, 32 individuals grew wheat, 12 corn and 10 "helba", all of whom are from Menia, and 10 grew sorghum in both Dakahlia and Menia, a variety of vegetables, legumes and grain were grown by no more than 7 or less individuals each (garlic, onions, tomatoes, peas, okra, cabbage, eggplant, green peppers, lettuce, potatoes, turnips, barley, and rice). Cotton, flax, and sunflower were grown by no more than 1 or 2 individuals for home use.

Since their last emigration, 41 farmers made changes in the crops they had cultivated prior to emigration; most are from Menia. Thirty one of these stopped cultivating certain crops and replaced them with new ones, 8 added new crops while continuing to grow the same main crops, and 2 just abandoned previously grown crops. (See reasons for discontinuation of crops in table below):

The most important new crops are sorghum, grown by 26 out of the 41 farmers who tried new crops, and coriander by 8 farmers. All of them are from the Menia villages; and so are the farmers who tried such new crops as sesame, (2) soya beans (1), and sunflower (1).

CROP	NO.	REASONS FOR DISCONTINUATION OF CROP
Corn	10	little demand for it; cultivated new crops, sorghum, "Mexican" wheat, coriander, sesame or soya beans because better yields, higher prices.
Wheat	3	gives low yields so changed to sorghum (it stays only a short time /ninety days in the ground, gives high yields and gets a good price), and to coriander or sunflower.
Garlic	6	Costly to grow; its price is not stable; the cooperative does not market it; it is attacked by pests;
Cotton	3	Does not give the same yield as before; changed to grapes, vegetables, now have choice to grow other things on Agrarian Reform land.
Rice	4	Changed to sorghum. Rice needs much water; and water is limited.
Miscellaneous (Vegetables, beets, onions flax beans sunflower)	7	unprofitable; vegetables, are attacked by pests; difficult to market; the price of barley is low. No one eats it now; and planting it is no longer obligatory. Growing beans takes a lot of effort; and the yield has decreased

In Dakahlia, only 2 farmers made any crop changes, both of whom planted grape vines. The explanation that the two Dakahlia farmers gave for changing from cultivating cotton to planting grapes point to some of the more recent changes in the government's agricultural policies. One said, "The Agrarian Reform told us that now we could choose to grow cotton or not; and they said we could plant grapes. So I stopped growing cotton and planted grape vines." The other explained, "The new crop I am growing is grapes because the Agrarian Reform administration gave the farmers the choice. They said those who would like to grow grapes can do so. It is not obligatory; but they gave us a choice. We found that our neighbors were

planning to plant grape vines, so we did the same; for it is not possible for us to grow crops independently from our neighbors."

The conservatism of the Dakahlia R/migrant farmers is no doubt due to the fact that the majority cultivate Agrarian Reform lands which, until very recently, have been more stringently controlled by the agricultural cooperatives of the Ministry of Agriculture than other lands. For all lands, the Ministry decided on the agricultural cycle; what proportion of the land was to be used for which crops. It also compelled the farmers to deliver a set quota of their crops to the agricultural cooperative. The local branches of the Bank of Agricultural Credit and Development provided credit and supplied subsidized seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Farmers in non-Agrarian Reform Areas sometimes deviated from the government policies and got away with it; but those in Agrarian Reform areas beneficiaries could not do so without losing their rights as beneficiaries.

Even when allowed to grow other crops than the traditional ones, the farmer has to follow the same type of cultivation as his neighbors. This is because the way the land of Agrarian Reform beneficiaries are scattered in three different areas and are consolidated with those of other farmers and the imposed joint irrigation system do not allow independent cultivation by any individual farmer.

When it comes to changes in seed variety, then the Dakahlia villages are well represented. Since their last emigration, 20.0% (141) of the landholders said they had changed the seed variety of some of the main crops. In Dakahlia, new seed varieties were used in relation to the following: cotton by 31.2% (54), rice by 25.4% (44), and wheat by 17.3% (30) of the landholders. In Menia the crops were: wheat by 20.0% (56), corn by 16.4% (46), and cotton by 3.6% (10) in Menia. It is well to point out that such changes were usually made, not at the farmers' initiative, but by the Ministry of Agriculture through the local branches of the Bank for Agricultural Credit and Development, which, until recently, provided the means of production for the main crops - that is, the seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.

Of the 86 (19.0%) landholders who mentioned a change in wheat variety, 24 thought the new variety superior to the old one because of its higher yields; 8 thought it inferior; and the rest made no comment, which can be taken as a sign of acceptance of the new variety. Of the 64 (14.1%) who mentioned cotton (all but 10 from Dakahlia), 15 found the new variety to be very poor and inferior to the old one, while 11 found it to be superior. Of the 55 (12.1%) who changed from the local variety to hybrid corn (all from Menia), only 3 farmers had complaints. The 46 (10.2%) who changed the rice variety (all from Dakahlia), 31 had no comment, 8 expressed satisfaction with the new variety and 8 thought the old one better.

### 3. Marketing

Until recent changes in government policy, the avenue for marketing the main crops was the agricultural cooperative. That, according to the respondents, was true of almost their entire cotton and rice crops, which are grown mostly in Dakahlia. About 42.3% of the wheat growers sell to the cooperative; and what is not consumed is sold directly to other families or to grain merchants.

Most of the corn is consumed and what is left is sold directly to other consumers through the district market. There is also greater freedom in the disposal of the fava beans and garlic. Both are grown exclusively by Menia farmers and are sold to private merchants.

A newspaper report (El-Akhbar, 7/6/93) states that a Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation decree was promulgated creating a high level committee for the free marketing of wheat. The committee is chaired by the ministry's Chief of the Agricultural Services, and is composed of the heads of the special supervisory bodies on exports and food products, the (El Kabida?) Company for Flour Mills and Silos, the Principal Bank for Agricultural Credit and Development; the Central Directorate for Agricultural Economics and Cooperatives; the regional directorates of the Ministry of Agriculture ; and the general associations of Rice and Grains Producers, of Agrarian Reform, and of Land Reclamation.

The same newspaper report states that the Minister of Agriculture has asked the above committee to formulate policies relating to the free marketing of this season's wheat crop and coordinate the work of various bodies concerned with it; so that the quantity of wheat that reaches the flour mills this season may increase from last year's 750,000 tons to 1.5 million.

#### 4. Method of Crop Transportation

Prior to the last emigration, the main methods used to transport crops from the fields were traditional - horse or donkey drawn cart in Dakahlia by 87.9% of the farmers (152 out of 173) and camels and/ or donkeys in Menia by 83.2% (233 out of 280). Only one person in Dakahlia and one in Menia used trucks; but 8.7% (15) in Dakahlia and 5.0% (14) in Menia used the tractors and 2.9% (8) in Menia used barges for crop transportation.

Since emigration, 40.0% (181) have changed the method of transportation, mostly in Menia, and mainly to more modern methods - trucks and tractors. Only 31 farmers in Dakahlia have made any changes; twenty-six changed from animal transport to tractors, which are modern machinery even if not basically meant to serve as means of crop transportation. Only one farmer in Dakahlia bought a truck. In Menia, on the other hand, 150 persons (53.7%) improved their transportation facilities switching from animals to trucks (9), trucks and tractors (63),

tractors (89), tractors along with animals (16), and animal drawn carts (20). Most of the new farm machinery and trucking vehicles are rented.

##### 5. The State of the Land and Cultivation During Migration

While away, the farmers left the land in the care of one or several of the other members of the family. Some 49.0% (309) designated only one of the immediate family members, usually but not exclusively from the nuclear family, as having been left in charge - 23.5% (148) the wife, 12.5% (79) a brother or brothers, and 5.9% (37) a son (and one daughter), 4.0% (25) the father, and 3.2% (20) the mother. The other 50.9% (321), left more than one member of the family looking after the land. The wife participated in 13.7% of the cases, the brother/s in 13.3%, the son/s in 7.8% (49), the father in 5.1% (32) and the mother in 5.9%. (37).

When the farmers were asked if the land and the cultivation had improved or deteriorated during their absence, 55.1% (347) said that nothing had changed, 11.1% indicated that the land had improved and only 4.6% (29) said that it had deteriorated. The reasons for the deterioration, according to the respondents, is the poor care the land was given during their absence, the lack of proper weeding and plowing and the limited use of manure. Four specifically referred to their wife's lack of experience and inability to work the land as well as they themselves can.



#### Example of respondent's statements:

The land deteriorated because of poor plowing and the limited use of manure .As a result it became full of weeds.

No one works with true honesty and care like the owner. That is why it became full of weeds and its fertility decreased, not because of the quality of the land itself but because of the dearth of agricultural laborers.

A woman does not have experience in cultivating and irrigating the land. My wife also had problems with the Agrarian Reform Cooperative because of the small quantity of crop that my wife was able to hand over.

The land became poorer because my wife cannot supervise the work of hired hands as well as I can. She does she know whether a hired worker has cleaned the land properly or not. I can do a better job because I understand more about agriculture than she does.

According to the farmers whose lands had deteriorated, once they returned and farmed their own lands again, the land has improved and crop production increased.

The farmers whose lands had improved during their absence referred to factors having little reference to emigration. The most important of these was the installation by the government of a new, covered drainage canal, which removed excess salinity from the soil.

#### 6 Savings and Agriculture

When we look at what the migrants did with their earned money, it becomes a little clearer wherein their real priorities lie or what their most urgent needs are. One should keep in mind, however, that many of these R/migrants had not stayed long enough abroad to accumulate enough for the purchase of major

farm machinery, or of agricultural land, the cost which rose steeply over the last decade or so. Some of the most recent returnees, 7.1% (45) of all R/migrants, who were forced back because of the Gulf War had not yet received, at the time the fieldwork, some of the payments due them. Eighteen of them said that the "yellow paper", the voucher with which they were supposed to receive the equivalent of their savings in hard currency from the Iraqi government, had not yet been cashed; while 27 said they had not earned much money and had saved nothing because they had not been long enough abroad.

Investment in real estate, by 39.4% (248) of the R/migrants, is the most frequent way in which their savings were used - building a house (179), buying land to build a house (56), and renovating and enlarging the house (13). The second most common expenditures, mentioned by 23.5% (148) of the /migrants, was for meeting household expenses and other basic needs, including the education of the children; and, at times, for the purchase of household furniture and equipment, such as a television or refrigerator, or even a car (just three persons).

Fifty-four R/migrants, 8.6%, spent some or all their earnings financing their own marriage or that of their children or other dependents, such as a brother or a sister (10); while 6 helped close relatives out of financial difficulties, to go on pilgrimage or to get medical care. When overlaps are removed for those who mentioned more than one of the above items of expenditure, we get a total of 384 migrants or 61.0% who spent

their savings exclusively on essential but non-productive investments and on consumer goods.

Only 16.0% (101) of the R/migrants spent their earnings on activities or assets related to agriculture. Forty-eight, 7.6%, bought agricultural land; 6.7% (42) farm animals (cows or water buffalos mainly); 2.9% (18) irrigation pumps, and 5 donkey carts.

The majority of those who bought agricultural land are farmers, 34 or 10.3% of their group; 5 are workers on family land, 5.1% of their group, and 5 are agricultural workers, or 3.5%. An equal proportion of farmers (27 or 8.2%) and of family workers (8 or 8.0%) bought farm animals; while a smaller proportion of the agricultural workers (5 or 3.5% ) and none of the landowners did so. Sixteen out of 18 diesel pumps were bought by farmers and only 2 were bought by family workers. Farmers also bought all five donkey carts.

Few of the agricultural workers, most of whom are landless and poor, have been able to save enough money to invest in land. Their accumulated savings were used mostly to meet their families' most essential needs. Without access to land, any investment in irrigation equipment would have been senseless. The landowners, who have other jobs and are generally better educated than the rest, invested neither in farm animals nor in diesel pumps, as most of them rent out their lands. They spent their savings mainly on real estate (26 out of 59 returned

landowners), on their families or to get married. Five used their savings to finance new enterprises, none of which related to agriculture. Neither did any of the commercial or productive activities in which another 14 R/migrants put their savings. All the investments were, rather, in such small enterprises as a brick factory, a butcher shop, a carpentry shop, a haberdashery, a passenger car or microbus.

A small number of the R/migrant's spent their money repaying debts (7) or just kept them as savings (3).

Comparing the two study areas, we find that, in both Dakahlia and Menia, there is a high proportion of investors in real estate - 41.7% (90) in Dakahlia and 38.2% (158) in Menia. On the other hand, relatively more people in Menia, 25.5%, than in Dakahlia, 13.0p% spent their savings on daily living and the family. As to investment in agriculture, it is the returned R/migrants of the Menia villages that are clearly in the lead. Thirty nine of the 48 who bought agricultural land, 33 of the 42 who bought farm animals, 14 of the 18 who bought irrigation pumps diesel, and all 5 individuals who bought donkey carts are from Menia.

#### **D. PERCEPTION OF IMPACT OF MIGRATION**

##### **1. Perception of Impact of Emigration**

Both migrants and non-migrants were asked if, in their opinion, emigration has had any effect on community life. The

respondents were almost equally divided among those who thought that emigration had made no difference (50.7%) and those who thought it had (49.0%). There were some differences in the reaction of various categories and between the Dakahlia and Menia respondents. About 60 percent of the migrant farmers said that emigration had affected their villages. The migrant family workers were almost equally divided between those who thought it did and those who affirmed it did not (50.5% and 49.5%, respectively); while more of the migrant and non-migrant agricultural workers and the landowners thought it had had no effect (between 56 and 57 percent).

Relatively more of the Menia respondents (56.3%) thought that there was impact; and the percentage was higher among the migrant farmers (66.7%). Of the Dakahlia interviewees, only 35.1% thought emigration had affected their communities; and here, too, the percentage was higher among the migrant farmers, 47.3%, but also among the family workers, 50.0%. The percentage was lowest among the non-migrants in the Dakahlia villages, 25% of the farmers and 22.7% of the agricultural workers. One possible explanation is that migration from Menia has been going on for many more years than in Dakahlia; hence, its repercussions are likely to be more discernable.

Those who thought that emigration had induced changes in their communities were asked to specify these changes. Their answers referred to both positive and negative impacts. The majority of the answers, 77.0% (471), specified positive changes and 23.0%

(141) negative effects. Although most of the answers of both Dakahlia and Menia respondents were positive, the percentage among the Menia respondents was much higher (81.5%) than among those of Dakahlia (60.6%).

The most frequent response was that emigration had improved people's incomes and levels of living (241 or 39.4% of all 612 answers received and 51.2% of the 471 positive answers, ). There was not much difference in the responses of migrants and non-migrants or of the sample from Menia and from Dakahlia. Typical answers:

People gained money. They bought land and built houses and are living well.

It made people live at a decent level. They were able to spend a lot of money and to dress up well.

People "ate bread" [made a living] from their travel abroad and the poor ones improved their situation.

Money became plentiful in the village. People could buy what they want and everyone became better off.

The next most frequently mentioned impacts, 164 or 34.8% of positive answers and 26.8% of all answers, are housing improvements and the construction of new buildings. Typical answers:

The town has become more beautiful than before. Now it has electricity and has big houses like apartment buildings.

The addition of many new buildings. Instead of living with one's father, everyone now has his own home. Previously, every three families lived in one house; now every family has its own.

Emigration made it possible for people to make money. Those who had no houses of their own were able to purchase land and build themselves new homes with red bricks.

Other desirable effects mentioned include: the ability of young people to get married, 3.4% of positive answers and 2.6% of all answers; improvement of agricultural land and cultivation or the purchase of irrigation diesel pumps, 3.2% and 2.5%; increased commercial and other economic activities, 2.5% and 2.0%. Positive effects, mentioned by only a handful of individuals each, include improvement in the security situation and decrease in the incidence of thefts in the village (6); evolution and increased awareness and knowledge of those who travelled abroad (5); and the decrease in the number of the unemployed (4).

Whereas few respondents perceive emigration as having any good effects on agriculture, most of those who mentioned negative effects, 71.6% (101), did refer to agriculture; and these constitute 16.5% of all answers, both positive and negative. Some referred to direct effects such as the neglect of the land and cultivation because of the absence of the male household head (mentioned by 33 persons and representing 23.4% of negative answers). The majority, however, referred to indirect impacts, namely, the rise in labor costs as a consequence of the agricultural manpower drain (68 persons and representing 48.2% of all negative answers).

Other negative impacts of emigration, in the view of the rest of the respondents, are: family problems such as increased absenteeism of children from school or the failure of children because of the absence of the father and the lack of parental control - 2.3% of all answers and 10.6% of negative answers (15); increase in the cost of living - 1.8% and 4.3% (11). The following were mentioned by no more than one to three individuals each: young people quitting school to work abroad; the construction of too many buildings; the improvement of some people's level of living and the decline of that of others; and people's lack of closeness to or care for each other.

The general question about the impact of emigration was followed by two questions probing specifically the respondents' perceptions of the effects on agriculture and on agricultural labor. Insofar as agriculture is concerned, only 37.1% (383) thought that emigration had in any way affected agriculture - with a higher percentage, 43.4%, among the Menia respondents than among those of Dakahlia, 25.00%. Asked to specify the effects, 77.6% referred to negative impacts and only 22.4% (91) to positive effects. Relatively more of the Menia respondents were positive about the impacts of emigration - 26.6% as over against 14.7% of the Dakahlia respondents.

The main positive impacts mentioned were: the ability of the farmer to spend money earned abroad on the improvement of his



land, cultivation and on the purchase of agricultural machinery, mainly irrigation diesel pumps. Examples of answers:

The land was given better attention because of the money that people working abroad sent to their families.

Because they had more money, people were able to cultivate crops that cost a lot to grow but that gave much profit.

Some brought seeds from outside, planted them and took good care of the land. All this was made possible because of the money they were able to earn abroad.

Those who did not have an irrigation pump bought themselves one.

The agricultural machinery and tools increased; people had money to buy what they need.

As to the impact of emigration on labor, the majority, 66.80%, in both Menia and Dakahlia thought it had. The main effect was, as may be expected, the decrease in the number of workers available in the labor market and the consequent increase in wages. Such impacts would probably be welcome to the laborers but less welcome to the farmers who have to depend on hired hands.

## 2. Perception of Impacts of Return Migration

The majority 69.1% (714) think that the return of the migrants had an effect on the village (75.3% of the Menia respondents and 57.3% of those of Dakahlia). The most frequently mentioned impact (36.3% of the responses) is the increase in the available labor. Some find this a positive development because, as one put it, "There are more laborers; and we can find people

to work for us." The majority, however, view the presence of large numbers of wage workers, and the consequent increase in unemployment and decrease in wages, as one of the serious negative aspects of the mass return of migrants.

Another impact, referred to in 12.7% of the responses, is the shrinking of incomes and the economic hardships that some of the families used to depend on money earned abroad are facing. A handful of these specifically mentioned the inability of farmers to spend on their cultivation forcing some of them to rent out their lands. Others referred to the rise in prices (8.8%), and the increase in crime (3.31%).

Perceived positive effects mainly relate to the improvements that the returnees were able to make for themselves. These improvements are specified as: the construction of buildings, houses and shops (150 or 17.7% of the responses); the ability of the returned farmers to take care of their lands, spend on cultivation and purchase farm machinery (54 or 6.4%); improvements in the living standards of the families of returnees and in the amenities at their disposal (90 or 10.6%); a more settled and secure family life and the settling down into marriage of young returnees (32 or 3.8%).

When asked specifically if the return of migrants had any repercussions on agriculture, 36.7% (379) said "yes", and 63.0% (651) said "no". Again, relatively more of the Menia respondents thought there was an impact, 44.9% as over against

21.1% of the Dakahlia respondents. The most important effect mentioned is the improvement of the land and of agricultural production. This is mainly "because the returnees are now looking after their farms and taking good care of them", mentioned by 72.8% of those who said there was an impact and representing 26.7% of all the interviewees. The availability of agricultural workers and the decrease in their wages is also perceived by some, 13.2% and 4.8%, as having a positive impact on agriculture, and the purchase by returnees of farm machinery, such as irrigation pumps and tractors, that helped improve farming. (10.3% and 3.5%).

The rest of the respondents mentioned effects of the return that are not very clear. Nine said that farmers rented out their lands because they could not farm them. This may be a reference to farmers who were forced to return because of the Gulf war before having accumulated any savings income or before getting paid. Seven said the agricultural land had become very expensive. This may be a reference to the rise in land prices resulting from the investment of returned migrants in agricultural land.

The majority of the respondents think that the migrants' return affected the labor market, 77.9% of all the respondents (69.4% in Dakahlia and 82.4% in Menia). About 90 percent of these spoke of the great increase in the available number of workers, half of whom also mentioned the increase in unemployment and the drop in workers' wages: "There are many workers and few job

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opportunities and the worker's wages have become very low." "There are no job opportunities for those who were abroad and have returned and many are unemployed."; "People outside used to find work everyday; but now I can't find any work because there is no demand, especially for someone like me, as I can neither read nor write."

Eight persons were happy to see that some of the skilled workers had returned. "Things have improved in every way. Before, if one needed a plumber or a carpenter, one couldn't find any." "Everyone has gone back to his original occupation or trade - be he a cultivator or a carpenter. Everyone now wants to do well in his job when previously they neglected their work. When we needed some skilled artisan or tradesman, we used not to find any. Now many are available."

### 3. Future Emigration

Is emigration still part of the aspirations of farmers and other agricultural workers? Despite the difficulties that many R/migrants encountered abroad, 57.9% (365) expressed their desire to emigrate anew - 49.6% of the farmers, 59.3% of the landowners, 66.7% of the family workers and 70.9% of the agricultural workers. A higher proportion among the Menia R/migrants than among those of Dakahlia (62.8% and 48.6%, respectively) intend to seek work abroad in the future. When the non-migrants were asked whether they contemplated

emigrating, 22.3% said they did (27.8% of the farmers and 29.0% of the agricultural workers).

When asked to which country they would like to go, the respondents, naturally, showed almost total disinterest in countries currently facing serious international political problems. Only 9 persons, 2.5% of those who want to emigrate again, mentioned Iraq; and 5 persons, 1.4%, designated Libya. There was lukewarm interest in a country like Jordan, which was mentioned by 8.5% (31). Most would be migrants turned their eyes mainly towards the more stable and richer Saudi Arabia, 59.2% (216) and, to a lesser extent, the Gulf States of Kuwait and the Emirates, 5.9% (49). Forty did not specify any preferred destination; they just wanted to emigrate "to any country".

As many of the R/migrants had suffered the effects of both the Iraq-Iran war, the Gulf war, and more than one exodus from Libya, it is not surprising that the most important consideration in their choice of a future country of immigration is its stability, the security of its jobs and the availability of work contracts. This is mentioned by 39.2% (143) of the R/migrants planning to emigrate again. Most of these were mainly referring to Saudi Arabia and a few to the other Gulf States and Jordan. As some have expressed it: "The country is reliable and you work there with a contract." "The job is secure and you get all what is due you in full." "It is a country that is a bit more stable than any other country."

The second most frequently mentioned reason, by 23.0 (84) for choice of a country is because it "has plenty of money"; "pays high wages"; or "has a strong currency". About one third of these were referring to the Gulf states, one third to Saudi Arabia, and the rest to the other countries. The next most frequent reason for the choice of country, by 18.6% (68) relates exclusively to Saudi Arabia. It is also "a holy, good and clean land"; "It is the country of the Prophet"; "one can go on pilgrimage there." Fifteen, 4.1%, chose countries to which they had been before. The rest gave miscellaneous answers and 10 gave none.

The 40 individuals who were interested in emigrating again but had not specified any particular country mentioned the conditions that they would like to find in the country of immigration. It should be a country with available, secure and/or well-paid jobs; one that "appreciates the worth of the Egyptian", one whose people are decent and kind; or "whatever country God wishes, but one that gives work contracts."

The reasons why 42.1% (265) do not wish to go abroad again are in the order of frequency: They are getting old and cannot bear "the difficulties of travel" and "the homesickness" or are ill, 29.4% (78). They have done well and made enough money abroad; they do not need to emigrate any more, 15.5% (41). They found little benefit in traveling; it brought them nothing but fatigue, living in foreign lands far from home and an unsettled

life, 14.0% (37). Only 10.% (29) said they did not wish to travel again in order to take care of their lands: "I thank God for everything. Now It is time for me to cultivate my land and look after my children"; "I don't want to leave by land. I want to take care of it and enjoy its bounty"; "I want to cultivate my land now. I have tried my fortune and that is enough." Others want to be with their families and/or their children, to look after them and/or to see to their education, 7.9% (21); they have a job or are working for the governemt, and cannot leave, 9.4% (25); and it is difficult to get a visa and/or travel is expensive, 4.2% (11). Eight, 3.0%, gave miscellaneous reasons for not wanting to emigrate; and 5.6% (15) gave no answer.

## V. SUMMARY-CONCLUSION

Following is a summary of the main results and conclusions:

### A. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

1. Composition of the Agricultural Labor Force - A total of 6696 individuals in the Household Survey sample are in the labor force, most of whom are active and 6.8% are unemployed. About 54% are engaged in work directly related to agriculture, 55% of whom are farmers cultivating their own or rented lands. The rest are mainly landless agricultural workers - 20% family workers, 19% non-specialized daily wage laborers, and 6% specialized workers.

2. Ever migrants - A little more than half of the economically active males and about a quarter of the unemployed in the Household Survey sample have at one time or another emigrated for work abroad, mainly to other Arab countries. More than half of them emigrated only once and about 28% twice.

The proportion of ever-migrants among those directly involved in agriculture is lower than that of other groups in the active labor force - 45% and 55%, respectively.

3. Current migrants - About 29% of ever migrants were current migrants at the time of the field surveys. The hardest hit by



the Gulf War were the farmers and agricultural family workers, none of whom were still abroad. Among those employed in agricultural activities, the specialized agricultural workers have the highest proportion of ever and of current migrants - 79 and 68 percent, respectively. They make up 75 percent of all current migrants in the sample.

**4. Dates and Destination of First Migrations** - The first wave of migration out of the study villages was in the 1970's. Over two thirds of these were from the Minia villages. Out-migration from the Dakahlia villages started slower and only during the second half of the decade. The largest proportion, 40%, of these early migrants went to Libya, all but three of whom were from Menia. Other migration destinations included Iraq, receiving 24% of the migrants, Saudi Arabia 18%, Jordan 13%, and Lebanon 3%.

The largest waves of out-migration of first-time migrants was in the 1980's, especially during the second half of the decade. Following the Sadat visit to Jerusalem and the Camp David agreement, in the latter half of the 1970's, Libya closed its doors to the Egyptian migrants and Iraq became the main migration destination. The latter attracted 55% of the new migrants, in the first half of the decade, and 62.3% in the second. First migrations to Jordan, and Saudi Arabia also increased.

The early 1990's, due to the Gulf war, saw the mass exodus of migrants out of Iraq. Saudi Arabia, for the first time, received the largest percentage of newcomers, 37%. Lybia, again, opened its doors to Egyptian immigrants. It received about 31%, Jordan 20% and Iraq only 4% of the new migrants.

## **B. SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF SAMPLE SURVEY OF RETURNED MIGRANTS**

### **1. Characteristics**

a. Age, Sex and Marital Status - About 58 percent of the R/migrants are in the 25-39 age bracket. The oldest are the farmers and the youngest, not surprisingly, are the family workers. The non-migrant farmers are older than the R/migrant farmers. About 51% of the former are over 50 in comparison with only 19% of the latter. All the ever-migrants are males. The only females in the sample are 13 non-migrant farmers/household heads. Among them are 12 widows and one divorcee. Most of the R/migrants are married. Only 1% of the farmers are single. The largest percentage of single individuals is among the younger family workers, 17%.

b. Education - About 86% of the R/migrants and non-migrants in the sample are illiterate or can just read and write. The highest rate of non-schooled individuals is among the non-migrant farmers in the sample, 94%, and agricultural workers, 97%.

c. Income - The income levels of the R/migrant farmers and agricultural workers seem to be very low. The figures given by the farmers, however, are not reliable. Referring obviously to their cash incomes only, they gave yearly incomes of between L.E.100 and L.E.3600. The daily wages of agricultural laborers, according to the respondents, are between L.E.2 and L.E.4.

## 2. Migration

a. Migration Destination - Most of the R/migrant farmers and other agricultural workers had flocked to countries that accept Egyptian migrants without visa or contract requirements - mainly Iraq and Lybia. Over 85% of the R/migrants went abroad without work contracts, especially the agricultural daily wage laborers and the family workers.

b. Reasons for Emigrating - The reason for emigrating for 53% of the group was, naturally, to find work and make a better income, improve the family's general level of living and, perhaps, acquire such coveted luxuries as a color television or a recorder. To these can be added about 8% who were pushed to seek their fortunes abroad because of particularly difficult economic circumstances: the rising cost of living, poor employment situation, limited land resources and indebtedness. Others had specific things in mind that they hoped to be able to finance with their savings: 18% wanted a house and 10% wanted to get married or to marry off dependents.

A very small number of the R/migrants said that they had emigrated because they wanted money to spend, specifically, on their farms or on agricultural assets. Of the eight who mentioned some productive enterprise or asset, in which they had hoped to invest their savings in the future, six spoke of the purchase of agricultural land and/or irrigation pumps.

c. Reasons for Return - About 88% of the R/migrant returned during the second half of the 80's and early 90's. Most of them, 78.7%, had been abroad for 2 or less years

About 44% of the migrants returned because of homesickness and loneliness and the desire to be with their families and children. One quarter did so because of push factors in the country of immigration - poor work conditions, bad treatment, deteriorating economic situation, and few work opportunities. Most of these had been in Iraq. Only 13% returned because they wanted to take care of their lands and cultivation; while 10 family workers were called back by their families to help with farm work.

d. Employment In Country of Immigration - Being without contract, most of the R/migrants accepted any work offered them in the country of immigration. Many just stood in what they call "el-saha", a square or an open space, waiting to be picked up by contractors or individuals in need of labor. About one third were engaged in construction work and the rest in

domestic or custodial jobs. Only 17 % took up jobs related to farming.

No more than 10% of the R/migrants found that their work abroad had added anything to their work skills. Except for two individuals, none had learned anything new related to agriculture. The rest acquired proficiency in blacksmithing, tailoring, carpentry, car mechanics, cooking etc - skills that are important to the rural community but that are not particularly relevant to agriculture.

### 3. Effects of Migration on Agriculture

a. How Earnings were spent - Although very few farmers gave as a reason for emigrating the desire to improve their lands and cultivation, we do find that 16% (101), mostly farmers, did spend their savings from work abroad on agricultural assets - 48 bought land, 42 farm animals, 18 irrigation pumps and 5 donkey carts. Most of these are from Menia.

Most of the R/migrants used their savings on basic but non-productive expenditures - 40% on real estate or home improvements, 23% on daily household and family needs, 8% to finance their own or a dependent/s marriage. Seven percent were forced back as a result of the Gulf War before they had accumulated any savings; and some are still waiting to be paid for their work in Iraq. A few used their earnings to help out some relatives or repay debts; and some just kept them as savings.

b. Effect of Migration on Land quality - The effect of migration on the quality of the farmland seems to have been limited, especially in Agrarian Reform areas, i.e., if we accept the assessment of the landholders themselves. In the opinion of 55% of the returned farmers, their lands neither improved nor deteriorated during their absence abroad; 11% thought it had improved, and only 4.6% thought it had deteriorated because of neglect.

c. Changes in Crop Variety, Method of Transport and Marketing - Have any changes occurred, since migration, in cropping patterns, crop variety, method of crop transport and marketing? Only 34 returned migrants said they had made any changes in the type of crops grown, all but two of them from Menia. The changes were mainly from traditional field crops like corn, wheat, cotton and rice to more "profitable" and "high yielding" crops like sorghum and coriander. A few, no more than one or two for each crop, have tried to cultivate such untraditional crops as sesame, soya beans and sunflower.

In Dakahlia, where the plots of individual farmers on Agrarian Reform land are fragmented and independent cultivation of new crops impossible because of the joint irrigation system, only two individual recently tried to grow grapes. That was upon receiving permission of the agricultural cooperative and after agreement with their neighbors/farmers on the land.

Since emigration, 20% of the landholders changed the seed variety of their main crops: cotton, wheat and rice in Dakahlia; and cotton, wheat and corn in Menia. These changes were usually made at the initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture's cooperatives, which supplied the seeds and other means of production.

More farmers in Menia, 53.7%, improved their means of crop transportation from animals to trucks, tractors, and animal drawn carts. In comparison, only 14.3% of the Dakahlia landholders made any such changes since emigration, switching mainly from animals to tractors. Most of the tractors and vehicles are rented.

**d. Perceptions of Impact of Emigration** - The interviewees are almost equally divided among those who think that emigration made some impact on their communities and those who do not perceive any. Relatively more of the Menia respondents, including both R/migrants and non-migrants, think that emigration has had an impact on their community, 56% of all the respondents and about 67% of the R/migrant farmers. In comparison, only 35% of the Dakahlia respondents perceive any effects; the percentage being highest among R/migrant farmers, 47%, and lowest among the non-migrant farmers, 25%, and agricultural workers, 23%.

Nearly 77% of those who perceived impacts mentioned positive changes - the fact that people improved their levels of living,

built new houses and large buildings, got married, and helped increase economic activities. Only 2.5% of all the respondents mentioned improvements related to agriculture, namely, the ability of migrant farmers to invest in and improve their farms. Most of those of those who mentioned negative effects, 72%, referred to agriculture (16% of those perceiving impacts and 10% of total sample). The majority referred to the rise in labor costs because of the manpower drain; and one third to the neglect of farmland.

When probed, a higher percentage, 37%, said emigration had had an impact on agriculture (43% in Menia and 25% in Dakahlia); and most of the impacts mentioned were negative, mainly the neglect of the land because of the absence of the farmers. As to the impact on labor, the majority in both Menia and Dakahlia, 67%, mentioned the decrease in available labor and increase in wages - a development obviously welcome to the laborers themselves and less desirable to farmers who depend on hired hands.

#### e. Perceptions of Impact of Migrants' Return

The majority find that the return of migrants had an impact on their communities (75% in Menia and 57% in Dakahlia). The main effects mentioned are: the increase in the number of agricultural workers, 36% of those who perceive impact, with a majority deploring the decrease in wages and increase of



unemployment; the shrinking of migrant families' incomes, 12.7%; rise in prices ,9%, and in crime, 3%.

The positive effects mentioned mentioned were: the construction of new homes, buildings and shops, by 18% of the respondents; the improvement of living standards, by 11%;, the return of farmers to take care of their cultivation and to buy farm machinery and irrigation pumps, by only 6%.

When probed specifically about agriculture, 37% thought that the return had no impact (45% in Menia and 21% in Dakahlia). As to the effects on the labor market, 78% (82% in Menia and 69 %) thought there was a marked increase in the available labor, half of whom mentioned the rise in unemployment and the decrease in wages. A small minority of 8 were happy about this labor situation because they can easily find cheap labor.

#### f. Intention to Emigrate in the Future

About 58% of the R/migrants would like to emigrate again - 50% of the farmers, 59% of the landowners, 67% of the family workers, and 71% of the agricultural workers, 28% of non-migrant farmers and 29% of non-migrant agricultural workers. Relatively more of the Menia farmers than of those of Dakahlia would like to emigrate again, 63% as over against 49% of the Dakahlia farmers.

The countries to which they would like to go are, understandably, the ones that are now more stable and that pay

good wages - Saudi Arabia, mainly, which was mentioned by 59% of the respondents who wish to emigrate again.

The reasons why some do not want to emigrate anew are: because they are getting old or are ill; they can no longer bear the difficulties of travel and of life in a strange country; they want to stay with their families and children. Only 10% said they want to stay behind to take care of their lands.

### C. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

#### 1. Agriculture and Emigration

The main overall conclusion of study is that the effects of agriculture on migration has been deeper than the effects of migration on agriculture.

In the study villages, a large percentage of the farmers and agricultural workers have had to emigrate, sometimes more than once, to be able to provide themselves with the basic needs of life - daily family needs, housing, marriage costs etc. These migrants did not only include the landless family and agricultural workers, who make up 45% of the agricultural manpower, but also the landowning farmers. With landholdings of between less than 1 and 3 feddans, the latter have also had to supplement their incomes with revenues from work abroad. In fact, so did a large percentage of the rest of the village manpower

A rapidly increasing rural population and limited land resources resulted in a large proportion of landless peasants and the fragmentation of much of Egypt's agricultural land - a situation that naturally encouraged rural out-migration. According to the director of the Principal Bank for Agricultural Credit and Development, 60-70% of the landholdings in the old lands are less than 1 feddan each. In Agrarian Reform Areas, land fragmentation is exacerbated by the Government's original land distribution and land management system, whereby each farmer's small holdings was split into three different plots, each of which is consolidated with those of other farmers for crop rotation and irrigation purposes. With the passage of time and the death of some of the original beneficiaries, inherited lands have been fragmented further into even smaller and less viable sizes.

The government's stringent control over the agricultural sector and over the price of main crops has also been a factor encouraging the out-migration of farmers and possibly discouraging investment in agriculture. Until very recently, all Egypt's agricultural resources were mobilized, through governmental central planning and administration, to meet national objectives. Once the Ministry of Agriculture had specified these objectives, the agricultural policies of the governorates, the districts, the villages, and down to the individual farmers were, accordingly, formulated so as to meet these objectives.

The government decided on the main crops to be cultivated, and the proportion of the land to be used for each crop. It also imposed the compulsory delivery to the agricultural cooperatives of quotas of such major crops as cotton, wheat and rice, for which the government paid less than the market price. Such stringent regulation of agriculture gave little scope to small farmers for maximizing their production and incomes by trying out new types of cultivation or seeking more advantageous marketing avenues.

In Agrarian Reform lands, which cover one million out of Egypt's 7.5 million feddans, the government was able to apply its agricultural policies even more effectively than in other areas. This is because of the threat of eviction that hung over Agrarian Reform beneficiaries. Elsewhere, non-conforming farmers often managed to get off lightly with little or no punishment. Fines of L.E. 50 per acre were imposed on the farmers who did not follow the government's cultivation regulations; but these fines were often cancelled at the end of the fiscal year.

As a senior official of the Principal Bank of Agricultural Credit and Development summed it, "Governmental regulations and management structures controlled agriculture in such a way as to constitute a disincentive in relation to land cultivation and production."

The government's agricultural policies have recently changed drastically as part of its economic restructuring policy. It gave Agrarian Reform beneficiaries ownership of their landholding and gave all farmers, as of 1993, greater freedom to cultivate other than the usual field crops and to market their crops through private channels.

The latest policy changes, however, seem to be creating new problems. Because of the suddenness of the change and the absence of private marketing structures to take over from the government, the farmer is finding difficulty marketing his crops. At the same time crop prices declined to a level even below that which the government used to pay. The issue has been hotly debated in the People's Assembly, particularly in relation to the marketing of this year's cotton crop. The government has had to come in with some emergency measures to buy the cotton from the farmers and to help out in its marketing. The government has also promised to guarantee a minimum price. The marketing of wheat is now also coming under discussion.

## **2. Emigration and Agriculture**

Has migration had any important impacts on agriculture? In the study villages, by all indications, the effects seem to have been negligible. First of all, emigration did not add much to the agricultural skills and experience of the farmers and other agricultural workers. Almost all of the R/migrants had

emigrated without having any work contracts in the country of destination where they accepted any type of employment offered them. Much of the work did not exploit their rich farming experience, nor did it, on the other hand, enrich them with new knowledge or skills relevant to farming.

A few migrants did learn new trades; but these have little to do with agriculture, such as carpentry, car mechanics, cooking, plastering, painting, quarrying and the like. That, of course, does not mean that the acquisition of such new capabilities would not be of value. These can provide the migrants with new vocational possibilities and the chance to offer important new services to their rural communities. If it were possible for large numbers of migrants to acquire new skills and follow new vocations, emigration could have, in the long run, the salutary effect of mitigating rural unemployment in both its disguised and manifest forms.

The effect of emigration in terms of any serious deterioration or serious improvement of agricultural land and cultivation was, according to the farmers themselves, minimal. A small percentage felt that their lands had been neglected during their absence and had improved upon their return. Most, however, had made satisfactory family arrangements for taking care of the land. Land improvement that was reported by some 10% of the returned farmers had little to do with migration but rather with the installation of a drainage canal by the government.

Investments of R/migrants' savings have effectuated little had basic changes and improvements in agriculture. The very small number who made some changes, such as the cultivation of new crops, the purchase of agricultural land or farm machinery and equipment, were mostly from Menia.

It is not surprising that almost none of the Dakahlia farmers have been able to make any changes in cropping patterns and that only a few have purchased land or farm equipment. First of all, most of the Dakahlia R/migrants are recent emigrants. Furthermore, most of them had been to Iraq and were forced back by the Gulf War before spending enough time to accumulate savings. More important is the fact that most of the Dakahlia R/migrant farmers are Agrarian Reform beneficiaries to whom the government, as noted earlier, did not allow the freedom of making any changes in cropping, irrigation or marketing patterns. Even if given such freedom, the Dakahlia farmers would still find difficulty deviating from the general pattern adopted by their neighbors because of the manner which their lands are subdivided and the joint irrigation system they share with their neighbors.

Emigration and return migration clearly have an important impact on the supply and wages of agricultural labor. There is, naturally, a decrease in labor supply and an increase in wages during large scale emigration; and an over supply of workers and job seekers, a rise in unemployment and a decrease in wages

following any mass return of migrants, as happened as an aftermath of the Gulf War.

### 3. The Future?

As the root causes of rural migration are not likely to disappear in the foreseeable future, emigration will remain one of the few available ways of alleviating rural poverty and of allowing the accumulation of savings and, if basic improvements in the agricultural system are achieved, possibly the eventual investment in the development of the rural economy and society.

One minimum condition, however, is necessary for migration to be of any benefit to the migrants themselves or to their communities: **some assurance of secure and continuous employment abroad.** So far, the rural migrants, skilled in agriculture but poor and uneducated, flock to countries that welcome cheap Egyptian labor without requiring either visas or contracts. Unfortunately, these are also the countries that have been the most erratic in their immigration policies (Libya), and most unstable politically (Iraq).

It is also with the above countries that Egypt has had the most turbulent and unpredictable relationships, sometimes swinging from close cooperation to downright hostility. The rural migrants have inevitably been the main victims. During the last 15 years, they have, several times, faced great hardships, bad treatment and sudden expulsions as relationships between Egypt and these countries became seriously strained.